DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 066 275 88 RC 006 393

TITLE	An Assessment of the Educational Needs of Indian Students in the State of Arizona.
INSTITUTION	Consulting Services Corp., Seattle, Wash.
SPONS AGENCY	Arizona State Dept. of Public Instruction, Phoenix.; Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Projects to Advance Creativity in Education.
PUB DATE	Dec 69
NOTE	83p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Education; *American Indians; Community Involvement; Cultural Differences; *Curriculum Design; *Educational Needs; Federal Programs; Self Concept; *Student Participation; *Student Teacher Relationship
IDENTIFIERS	*Arizona

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to offer general and comprehensive information on American Indian education as it pertains to Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in Arizona. The primary vehicle used for collecting information was the focus interview--a technique used to gather in-depth information on opinions and preferences. The interview sessions included 8-12 participants who were encouraged to comment on all aspects of Indian educational needs. Tape recordings of the interviews with parents, students, and teachers were made by 2 interviewers, both of whom later filled out an interviewer's report form. Findings indicated that there are cultural differences among Indians and non-Indians; that the students suffer from feelings of inferiority; that because school personnel fail to recognize cultural differences and are unable to adapt to the teaching of Indian students, the students are not qualified to face the outside world and drop out; and that school changes tend to be superficial. Standardized scores showed Indian students to be below the standard norms. Based on what was learned from the focus interviews, 19 recommendations were listed for the administration of Title III at the state level and for the educational needs and commensurate project alternatives from the focus interviews. Six underlying needs discovered in the focus interviews were improvement of educator-learner relationships, student self-image, student involvement, educational administration, curriculum structure, and community involvement. (FF)

ED 066275

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Prepared for

Title III ESEA Advisory Council

December 1969

Consulting Services Corporation
1602 Tower Building
Seattle, Washington 98101

RC006393

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
INTRODUCTION		i
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS		iv
SECTION I:	STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS, GOALS AND NEEDS	1
SECTION II:	SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE	11
	Educator-Learner Relationships	11
	Student Self-Image	18
	Student Involvement	24
	Educational Administration	30
	Curriculum Structure	35
	Community Involvement	42
SECTION III:	METHODOLOGY	46
APPENDICES:	FOCUS INTERVIEW EXCERPTS	51
	PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE	60
CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS		64

INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared for the Arizona State Department of Public Instruction and for the Title III ESEA Advisory Council.

The intent of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is to improve the educational system over time through financial encouragement of those innovative and exemplary programs which show the most promise of alleviating critical educational needs. The act calls for a statewide Title III plan which reflects differences in educational needs by geographic area and population group within the state. This study deals with the critical educational needs of one segment of the Arizona population--Indians--and includes information from three different sections of the state

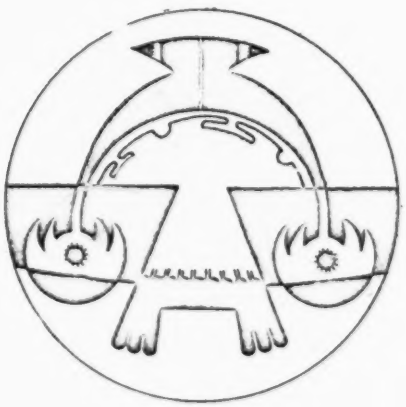
In order to further fulfill the statutory requirements of ESEA, the Arizona Department of Public Instruction also contracted with Arizona State University. The contract calls for the University to prepare a model, or statement of procedures, for a more comprehensive assessment of critical educational needs in the state. The Arizona State University contract is for long-range use by the department, with the model expected to be completed during the 1970 calendar year and to become operational at a later date.

By comparison to the University work, the present study is for interim use by the Advisory Council as background information which will assist them in screening applications for grants. Since the applications for Title III grants were to be reviewed in the fall of 1969, the background information on Indian education, to be of immediate and practical value, had to be completed by December 1969. In addition to the time constraint, the budget for the project was severely limited. Within these constraints, the Advisory Council needed practical, probing information which would yield special insights into Arizona's Indian educational problems.

Although the methodology is stated more fully in Section III of this report, the data collection techniques which were employed should be summarized at this point. The primary vehicle for collecting information was the focus interview--a technique that is used to obtain in-depth information on peoples' opinions and preferences. The focus interview session usually included 8-12 participants, and every effort was made to encourage the participants to express their opinions and attitudes on all aspects of Indian educational needs. As a general rule, the group interviews usually lead to greater involvement of the participants and stimulate them to express opinions they might normally repress. At the end of each focus interview, the participants were asked for their

perception of the educational goal with the greatest unmet need. They were also asked to comment on underlying problems of the educational need and to suggest projects which could alleviate the need. All group interviews were tape recorded for later analysis and most sessions were attended by two interviewers, each of which filled out an interviewer report form.

In designing the techniques and instruments to be utilized, several objectives had to be met: (a) the study should provide in-depth information on educational needs, (b) it should be quantified to the maximum extent possible, (c) it should be expandable to represent ethnic and geographic differences in the total state, and (d) it should not duplicate work in the area of needs assessment undertaken by Arizona State University.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Preface

The information summarized here was gathered with the expectation that it would have immediate and practical application in administration of the Arizona Title III program. Hence, the objective of the report is to offer general and comprehensive background information on Indian education as it pertains to Title III. By design, the study was an effort to obtain qualified (rather than quantified) information on a small budget and in a short time.

School Flexibility

There are significant and basic cultural differences between the average Indian and the average American. This is an obvious statement which even the most casual observer will grant. Yet in spite of the unanimous recognition of cultural differences, there is no indication that rural schools serving a predominantly Indian population are significantly different than their counterparts in metropolitan districts serving white middle class students. The school buildings, curricula, schedules, libraries, administrators, and teachers --all but the students--are nearly identical. Standardiza-

tion has unfortunately progressed to the extent that there is practically no difference in schools regardless of cultural, social, or economic differences. While Arizona's schools serve an extraordinary range of ethnic groups it must be conceded that the school system itself makes no major attempt to adapt its curricula, resources, or methodology to any single ethnic group.

While it is obvious that the school system is relatively inflexible, the causal factors for the inflexibility are not so obvious. Two alternative causal factors might be considered:

a. The school is oriented or fixated on a single ethnic group that comprises the vast majority of its clients (urban, white students) and as a result of the fixation, neglects to adapt to the ethnic minority groups in the state, or

b. The school is not oriented to any ethnic group but to the precept of perpetuation of the school system itself.

It is important to the administration of the Title III program that the inflexibility of the school system and its causes be understood. Two of the major underlying problems of Indian students, for example--feelings of inferiority and lack of confidence--are acquired in no small part in the classroom. A feeling of inferiority is not simply a historical cultural characteristic of the Indians, but, to a significant extent, the result of friction between a cultural minority and an inflexible school system, as will be brought out in the text below.

School Recognition of Cultural Differences

School personnel do not fail to recognize cultural differences between their thinking and that of the Indian students. Simply recognizing a different cultural trait is not enough, however; it must be correctly identified before it can be successfully dealt with. During the focus interviews with teachers and administrators, an aura of complacency often permeated the discussions when they centered on cultural differences; as if by recognizing that a cultural difference existed, the problem would be solved. The attitude is epitomized by one teacher's comment, "We've taught them (Indians) 2,000 years of civilization in five years, if you really think about it."

In another instance, an educator told of an Indian woman who had been ailing and under the care of a medical doctor for five years. The medical treatment had not helped and, after five years, the woman was planning to have a ten-day fire dance. The woman wanted her daughter home from school to participate in the fire dance. The educator viewed it, quite properly, as "this ceremonial pull, this cultural pull...," but was appalled that the daughter would participate in a primitive ritual. It should here be emphasized that the vast majority of educators are aligned with the two educators quoted above. It is incongruous, however, to classify a fire dance as "primitive ritual" and as "civilized" the faith healing at Lourdes, France, and throughout the United States. Another civilized custom that would seem

to be both primitive and ritualized is the funeral, including the wake and burial.

The Indian behavior which is most troublesome in the classroom is "impassiveness" and brevity in response to questions from the teacher. Aside from related cultural considerations such as non-competitiveness, feelings of inferiority, etc., it should be pointed out that some, if not most, of the Indian cultures in Arizona teach that deference to elders is shown by never looking them directly in the eye. A well-mannered Indian, while listening to his parents, will have his eyes cast down. When he speaks to them, he adopts a submissive tone of voice and does not raise his eyes to them. Many of the teachers complained during the focus interview that they had trouble in getting the students to participate in class discussions and even getting the students to look at them directly when answering a question. It is apparent that the teachers recognized a cultural difference, but could neither identify it correctly nor cope with it in a classroom situation. The behavior of many of the "impassive" Indian students was described as frustrating and maddening. Conrad Lorenz in his book <u>On Aggression</u> had the following to say about cultural differences:

> "The important function of polite manners can be studied to great advantage in the social interaction between different cultures and subcultures. A considerable proportion of the mannerisms enjoined by good manners are culturally ritualized exaggerations of submissive gestures ... Local traditions of good manners, in different subcultures, demand that a quantitatively different emphasis be put on these expression movements. A good example is

furnished by the attitude of polite listening which consists in stretching the neck forward and simultaneously tilting the head sideways, thus emphatically 'lending an ear' to the person who is speaking. The motor pattern conveys readiness to listen attentively and even to obey. In the polite manners of some Asiatic cultures it has obviously undergone strong mimic exaggeration; in Austrians, particularly in well-bred ladies, it is one of the commonest gestures of politeness; in other Central European countries it appears to be less emphasized. In some parts of northern Germany it is reduced to a minimum, if not absent. In these subcultures it is considered correct and polite for the listener to hold the head high and look the speaker straight in the face, exactly as a soldier is supposed to do when listening to orders.

"Of course the meaning of any conciliatory gesture of this kind is determined exclusively by the convention agreed upon by the sender and the receiver of one system of communication. Between cultures in which this convention is different, misunderstandings are unavoidable. By East Prussian standards a polite Japanese performing the 'ear-tending' movement would be considered to be cringing in abject slavish fear, while by Japanese standards an East Prussian listening politely would evoke the impression of uncompromising hostility.

> "It is perfectly right and legitimate that we should consider as good the manners which our parents have taught us, that we should hold sacred social norms and rites handed down to us by the tradition of our culture. What we must guard against, with all the power of rational responsibility, is our natural inclination to regard the social rites and norms of other cultures as inferior."

It is regrettable, then, that many educators, who not only consider themselves unprejudiced toward Indians, but their defenders and benefactors, can at the same time misinterpret so many cultural traits--can even state superciliously that "we've taught them 2,000 years of civilization in five years, if you really think about it."

Another teacher spoke for many others when she tried to convince herself that the Indian students were quiet, soft-spoken and impassive because they wanted to be "left alone." She said, "I haven't been able to get them to express themselves. You don't know even if they are unhappy really... they are so quiet in comparison to the mass demanding of attention that all the others demand, I'm not really aware that they are there all the time...they never make any demands--they just want to be left alone."

As with any culture, the Indians have extremely strong emotional mechanisms perpetuating their mores. A para-professional Indian woman explained that although she was in her mid-fifties she still was not allowed to look directly at her 86 year old mother when talking to her.

It can be concluded from the foregoing discussion:

1. That the educational system in Arizona is confronted with the problem of teaching Indian students who manifest dramatically different cultural traits than those possessed by the school staff.

2. That the individual schools with significant numbers of Indian students have effected no major changes to more successfully educate those students.

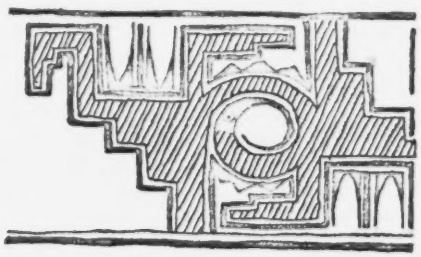
3. That the vast majority of educators, while recognizing cultural differences, cannot accurately identify and cope with the different cultural traits represented by the Indian students.

4. That the school's (local, private, and BIA) inability to adapt to the special requirements of Indian students contributes to the Indian's lack of confidence and feelings of inferiority, which he usually carries with him the rest of his life.

Educator-Learner Relationships

The school system's inability to adapt to change has a much different effect on Indian students than on white students. While both types of students protest the inflexibility, the protest takes dramatically different forms.

For white students, the action is more direct and more positively oriented to change. They articulate specific requests for changes and, at least in higher education, the protest occasionally becomes violent--as manifest in the growing number of college campus riots during the last few years. Many of the complaints of white students could also be registered by Indian students. They claim that the schools are involved in a "policy of mistrust," that the schools blindly follow tradition without regard to the effectiveness of their methods; and that there is obvious hypocrisy by individual teachers and by the system as a whole. The hypocrisy of the system is implied in such statements as, "Grades do not serve as an incentive for better learning; they teach students to (a) cheat for higher grades, and (b) establish higher grades as a goal which is an end in itself." As for responsibility: "Student government doesn't really govern anything. It doesn't teach students to accept responsibility so much as it teaches them that the school doesn't trust them with real responsibility."



Indian students do not riot. Nor do they protest openly. The Indian form of protest is withdrawal. They drop out of school even though they know they will be advanced to the next grade whether they have learned anything or not (another hypocrisy?).

Indian students interviewed during the course of this study gave many reasons for why students dropped out, but the general attitude was that students did not "attend" school so much as they "endured" it. The majority of Indian students seemed to be neither concerned about the enjoyment of learning nor the application of the learning in a practical situation. They attend school as they would pay a penance, sitting in class and desperately hoping not to be singled out for attention. After 12 years of enduring the education ritual, they receive a high school diploma, and then they no longer have to risk being called on in class. After high school, they face some uncomfortable decisions. They can go on to the BIA relocation school or get a summer job or go on welfare. To attend relocation school they have to leave the reservation. They would have to leave their friends behind and they do not make new friends easily, particularly in a strange urban area. A teacher stated it this way, "We graduate them from high school here, and other places, and they have received a diploma. But they are no more qualified to go out in the outside world..." An Indian student commented, "If they could just understand why (Indian students) are having problems and how they're going to fit into this world; Indians do have a part in this world instead of just trying to be a white man."

School Administration and Imaginative Leadership

There is an abundance of statistics relative to Indians and Indian education. Evaluations of individual programs are readily available. Standardized test scores indicate that

Indians are far below the norm in reading ability, language skills, and other cognitive skills. Truancy and dropout rates are two to three times the national average. Of the few who do graduate from high school, their achievement is between the ninth and tenth grades. despite a diploma attesting to successful completion of the twelfth grade.

It cannot be denied that there are special, unique, frustrating problems in adapting an education system to Indians, or to any other ethnic minority. Neither can it be denied that schools have tried to educate Indians and failed. The failure, even when measured by the success standards established by the school system itself, has been neither slight nor lacking in visibility. The failure has been substantial and obvious for years. In view of the continuing failure to even achieve normal attendance rates, the most relevant question then is: Why haven't there been substantial adaptive changes in the school system? The answer seems to be that school administrators can only think in terms of the presently operating system, which they unquestioningly perpetuate. They typically do not set goals or objectives outside that system. For example, they usually think in terms of the community in relation to the school rather than the school in relation to the community. Consequently, changes tend to be superficial and well within the constraints of what administrators consider to be "givens," (i.e., class schedules, curriculum design, basic teaching methods, etc.). Many of the "givens," of course are institutional dogma rather than real constraints. Nevertheless, concepts for major innovation or sweeping changes are almost non-

existent. Administrative reaction to major change is polite tolerance, so long as the project is academic or research oriented.

Maximizing the Impact of Title III Funds

During the course of the focus interviews conducted as part of the Indian education study, a number of suggestions for improving Indian education were offered by the respondents interviewed. Most suggestions do not require Title III funds because they are neither innovative nor exemplary--they simply require that schools fulfill the functions which they are capable of doing with the present array of Federal programs and local funds. This is not to say that

the average district is adequately funded or that the Title III program in Arizona has superfluous funds. Some projects suggested during the interviews, such as more Indian counselors and more Indian involvement, can be funded utilizing Title I ESEA.

The following text summarizes recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of the Title III program relative to Indian education in Arizona. The recommendations are in two parts. The first part is devoted to administration of the program at the state level. The second part summarizes educational needs and commensurate project alternatives from the focus interviews.

1. The state Title III permanent staff should be expanded to allow (a) more rigorous quantitative evaluations of individual projects, (b) more extensive technical assistance to individual districts, and (c) more detailed and more comprehensive dissemination of information relative to successful Title III projects. While the present state Title III administration is doing an excellent job, approximately three professionals should be added to maximize the effectiveness of the program.

2. The relevant Title III projects funded in other states be made available in annotated bibliography form to school districts with substantial Indian populations. It is recognized that such information is stored in ERIC, but retrieval is not sufficiently simplified for local school districts.

3. Applicants for Title III funds should be stimulated to think in terms of comprehensive and basic changes in the educational system rather than refinement of, by now, widely accepted techniques such as Computer Assisted Instruction or team teaching.

4. Additional state technical assistance in the form of trained specialists should be made available for local problem solving--many such problems do not require Title III funds so much as local administrative skills, imagination, and leadership. While the school system may need more money in the way of operating funds, other studies have cited little or no correlation between "compensatory" expenditures and pupil test scores. More recently, a study of public education in New York City found that improvement in reading skills was not associated with infusion of additional funds so much as with staff morale--as reflected in a principal's "confidence in his professional staff, his respect for teaching aids, his sympathy for innovation, and his success in developing ties between parents, the community, and the school."

5. The expanded state staff should coordinate closely with other sources of funds such as Title I ESEA, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs programs to assure ease of referral if a Title III applicant is not truly innovative and exemplary.

6. The state should both encourage and concentrate its limited Title III funds on projects that attack several facets of a complex problem simultaneously. The piecemeal approach to solving Indian educational problems has not and will not solve the problem of underachieving Indians.

The most critical educational needs, as obtained from the focus interviews, are presented below. They are classified in six categories of learner needs. See page six for definitions of each classification. It should be kept in mind that not all the needs listed below are appropriate for Title III projects.

A. Educator-Learner Relationships

1. There is a need to expand the present educational system's resources in terms of para-professionals, tutors and counselors in order to establish closer communications between students and educators.

2. There is a need for teachers who have a fuller awareness of the special problems Indian students have and who are trained to work with these problems.

B. Student Self-Image

1. Because of continued past failures in the educational system, there is a need to provide students with visible successes in order to instill some measure of self-confidence.

2. Indian culture classes, if carefully designed, could provide the stimulus in fostering a sense of identity and self-esteem in the Indian student. The classes should have as the primary objective improving self-image, with the cultural aspect viewed as a vehicle.

C. Student Involvement

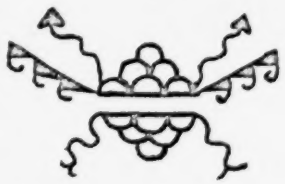
1. Direct student participation in the learning processes is needed to foster a more meaningful relationship between the students and the curriculum.

2. More student tutors should be considered as an alternate resource in meeting the need to bolster educator-learner relationships. The experience would also provide the tutors with an excellent learning environment and a sense of responsibility.

D. Educational Administration

1. Although administrators are continually involved in planning, the planning rarely is done outside the context of the traditional educational system. In view of the failure of the present system to meet Indian problems, there is a need to explore solutions outside the present system.

2. A smoother and more consistent transition between the different levels of school (say between elementary and junior high) is needed.



E. Curriculum Structure

1. Greater emphasis is needed on teaching English as a second language. Speech classes were suggested as one means to bolster student confidence.

2. A wider variety of vocational courses is needed to provide students with the skills necessary to succeed in modern society.

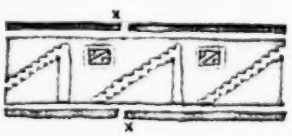
3. More effort is needed to coordinate the resources of various agencies in acquainting students with vocational opportunities.

F. Community Involvement

1. Before the larger Indian community can become actively involved in educational planning, the adult's self-image needs bolstering just as the student's does.

2. Parents should be consulted in matters pertaining to goals and programs planned for their children.

3. Parents might be effectively utilized as aides in the schools to provide supplementary experiences or success to the students.



xx

SECTIONS I - III

SECTION I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS.
GOALS AND NEEDS

Problems

In determining the educational needs of any group of students, It is logical to first examine the goals set for the group and the means, or curriculum, designed to meet the goals. In the case of the Indian student, however, the interpretation of any given list of goals varies as one talks to each of the groups directly affected by the educational system. The differences in interpretations of goals among the three groups interviewed --students, parents and teachers--tend to reflect experiences with the educational system specifically and with the major cultural forces in the country generally.

One of the basic areas of disagreement among the groups is the question of what role the reservation should play in the lives of the current and coming generations of Indian students.

Teachers thought that one goal of education is to assimilate the Indian into the dominant Caucasian society and eventually to "terminate" the reservations. The vast majority of teachers interviewed were Caucasian. By definition they had achieved some measure of success in society as college graduates and professionals. Many of them, teachers as well as administrators, were not sensitive to those values of importance in the Indian culture.

Rather than examining the Indian tradition in terms of positive contribution to society, the overall impression one receives from talking to educators, and listening to educators talk among themselves, is that the Indian heritage consists of superstitions, taboos and such irrelevant nonsense as the spirit of noncompetitiveness. Indian parent attitudes have been shaped by just such paternalism and self-righteousness, although individual parents react differently to the pressures imposed on them by the larger society. Some simply give up. They leave the decisions in the hands of the society which has beaten them. Other parents expect the educational system, by itself, to make something of their children because the parents have been convinced they are inadequate and their ways are inadequate. Still other parents are determined that their children will get a high school diploma, go to college and become a success, no matter what price has to be paid in terms of the child's ability and willingness to accept and adjust to those goals. Many of the parents who speak English, as well as their native Indian language, have chosen to speak English in the home in the hopes of giving their children an added edge towards success.

Caught in the middle of this upheaval is the student. His home society is alien to his school society. He is aware that external forces have shaped his parents' attitudes and are working on his as well. He does not believe that the school is preparing him to make a free choice. He is not oriented to success, but to failure and fear of failure. The reservation, while a place of comfort, is also asso-

ciated with failure. To achieve "success," he must leave the reservation--to return to the reservation is synonymous with failure.

Goals and Underlying Needs

To stimulate conversation at focus interviews, Consulting Services Corporation prepared a list of goals to be distributed at the beginning of each interview. The goals were stated (a) in terms broad enough to encompass the viewpoints and ideas expressed by each group of respondents and (b) in terms of the experiences a student should be receiving in school to enable him to achieve the goals. "The educational system should allow a student to:

Understand himself and appreciate his dignity as an individual and his identity as a member of society.

Understand and appreciate different social, cultural and ethnic groups as well as his own.

Achieve basic skills in the use of words and numbers.

Obtain a positive attitude towards the learning process.

Learn the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

Learn good physical health habits.

Recognize the opportunity to be creative and follow his own interests.

Understand and appreciate accomplishments in the arts and sciences.

Be able to adjust to the rapidly changing world of the future."

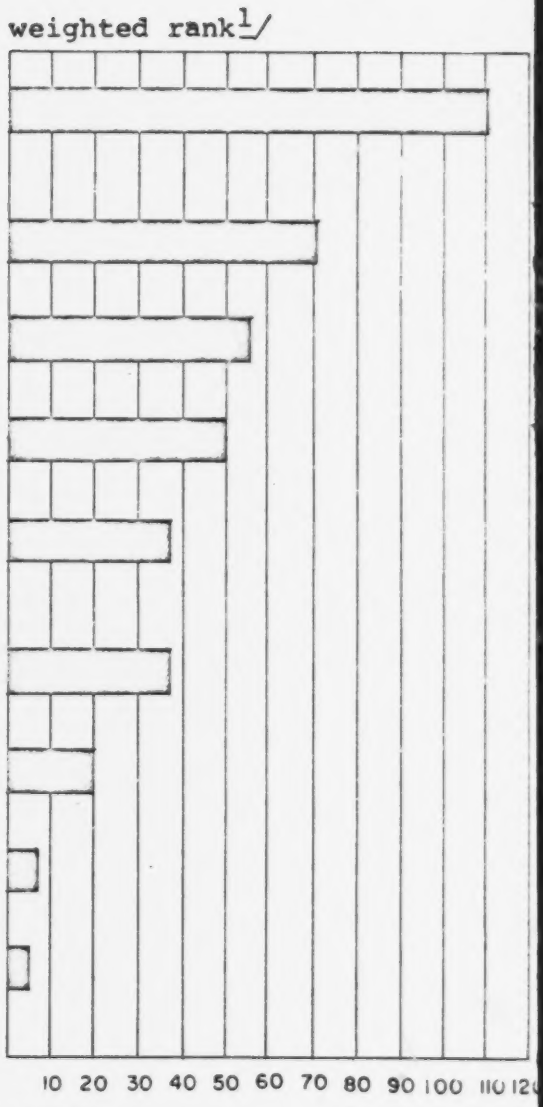
There was some difficulty in getting respondents to talk of goals in these terms because parents, students and teachers had been thinking of goals as: (a) getting a high school diploma, (b) graduating from college, and (c) becoming a "success" in life.

At the end of each focus interview, respondents were asked to rank the three goals they felt were most important. The basis of the ranking was to be their perception of the magnitude of the unmet need of the goal, rather than the value of the goal itself. Exhibit I indicates the relative importance of each of the goals in terms of perceived unmet need. Because of the limited size of the sample, the responses have not been broken out by respondent types. Although there was some agreement as to basic goals, the ranking of the goals varied from group to group (discussed further in Section II).

As a different dimension than the ranking of goals, each comment during the focus interviews was classified in terms of the six "underlying needs" given below. The categories were developed after considerable staff discussion and consultation with outside professionals. The

EXHIBIT I

PERCEIVED EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF RESPONDENTS


weighted rank 1/
understand himself and appreciate his dignity as an individual and his identity as a member of society
obtain a positive attitude toward the learning process
achieve basic skills in the use of words and numbers
be able to adjust to the rapidly changing world of the future
understand and appriciate different social, cultural and ethnic groups as well as his own
learn the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship
recognize the opportunity to be creative and follow his own interests
understand and appreciate accomplishments in the arts and sciences
learn good physical health habits
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110

Numbers show relative importance of each need.

1/ Based on response to questionnaires. Each respondent had the opportunity to indicate his preference for the first, second, and third most important goals.

ranking is simply a reflection of the proportion of time spent discussing a particular subject. Consequently, the ranked needs should be related to ranked goals before conclusions are drawn from the interview information. In arriving at a final order of the statements of need, each respondent group was given an equal weight. The ranked list below reflects the general consensus of all respondents:

1. There is a need to establish educator-learner relationships promoting further understanding, respect and communication between students and educators.

2. There is a need for the personnel involved in educational administration to provide the processes by which educational goals are defined and resources coordinated to achieve the goals.

3. There is a need for building the self-image of the Indian student to provide the student with a sense of dignity and pride to foster self-esteem and a sense of identity, encouraging self-confidence and a willingness to compete.

4. There is a need to develop student involvement, encouraging student interest and participation in the learning process, providing experiences of responsibility and authority, and participation in decisions concerning their education.

5. There is a need to promote community involvement and to encourage the participation of the community in the educational system for the purpose of defining and achieving educational goals.

6. There is a need to reorganize curriculum structures in conjunction with reexamining the content of subject matter taught in the schools.

It would seem that the first ranked need should be "student self-image." In examining the ranking of goals, we do find it first as: "The student should understand himself and appreciate his dignity as an individual and his identity as a member of society." However, the methodology used in arriving at each of these rankings plays an important role in the ordering of each list. The goals were prestated for the respondents. They did not identify themselves personally but just marked a 1, 2, or 3 on a piece of paper. The ranking of needs, on the other hand, was arrived at by measuring the frequency with which respondents discussed the topics during the focus interview. Given the situation of an unknown white interviewer, however friendly, asking for the Indian's feelings on education, one would not expect the Indian, student or parent, to dwell on the topics of inferiority and lack of pride. Rather, they stressed programs, administrative and personnel changes which relate to the topic of self-image. They sought

to express the thoughts involved in self-image indirectly. Each of the six need statements revolve around (a) the basic problem of lack of communication and coordination of efforts and (b) the need to articulate the goals of education for the Indian and then to work towards the achievement of these predetermined goals.

Exhibit II indicates the relative frequency with which the needs categories were mentioned by each group of respondents. As previously mentioned, the six need categories have not been ranked in terms of importance per se. Rather, the order shown in Exhibit II represents the frequency with which each topic was covered by the participants in the focus interviews. Though the "ranking" of needs does not indicate the relative importance of each need, it does suggest an order in which it might be feasible to meet the needs expressed by the respondents. The ordering is most apparent when one examines the individual group rankings (Exhibit II) rather than the composite.

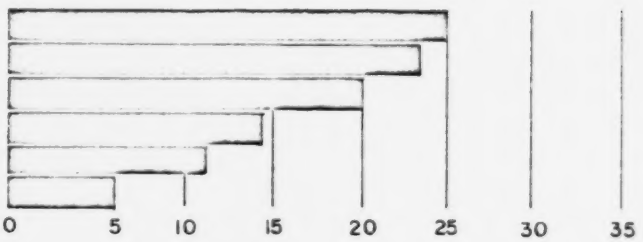
An example of the relationship and ordering evident in the needs ranking is apparent by briefly summarizing the student position: the most pressing need is for teachers who are open to student ideas and needs, who understand and appreciate the socio-economic background of their students and who encourage student participation in the classroom. From the atmosphere created by warmer educator-learner relationships, the students feel that an increasingly more positive self-image will emerge. As they achieve more success and gain more confidence, the students will be asking for greater involvement in shaping the content of the curriculum, in participating more fully in the learning process and in education planning. To implement

EXHIBIT II

CLASSIFICATION OF NEED STATEMENTS BY TYPE OF RESPONDENT [1]

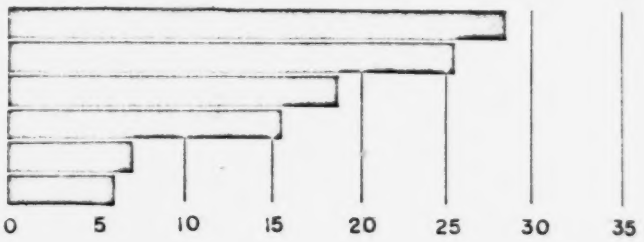
STUDENTS

educator-learner relationships
student self-image
student involvement
educational administration
curriculum structure
community involvement



TEACHERS

educator-learner relationships
educational administration
curriculum structure
student self-image
student involvement
community involvement



PARENTS

community involvement
educational administration
educator-learner relationships
student involvement
student self-image
curriculum structure

[1] Each need catagory is expressed as a percent of the total statements classified by respondent type.

the first three needs, the students turn to the administrators as well as the teachers. Educational administration should be providing the support and encouragement to see that needs are met by such means as coordination of programs and restructuring of curriculum, discipline and dress codes. The curriculum structure, as the basic tool by which the schools operate, should take into account the widening interest the students have, as well as restricting factors such as isolated environmental conditions and language difficulties. The role of the community was not well defined by the students interviewed. The factors involved in the lack of student suggestions concerning community involvement center around the ambivalent role currently assigned to their parents and the cultural values associated with them.

SECTION II

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

The following discussion of the six need categories has been organized according to the order in which the needs were "ranked" by student participants. This choice was made, not only because the rank given the needs by the students fits a more logical pattern in our minds, but because we feel the student groups were the most responsive with which to discuss educational needs. The discussion has been organized to bring in the viewpoints of each group of respondents--students, teachers and parents--in each of the six need categories to point out the differences and similarities of ideas held by each group.

Educator-Learner Relationships

The foundation of a positive learning relationship between student and educator (including administrators) rests on four main components: a knowledge and understanding of the socio-economic factors affecting the student and the community, the degree of communication and respect established between student and teacher, the school atmosphere generated by teacher attitudes, and the teaching methods employed by the individual teachers.

Generally speaking, the teachers involved in the discussion groups had some knowledge of the problems facing their Indian students due to social and economic conditions. All teacher groups mentioned the difficulties involved in teaching students whose native language was Indian. Even with this basic knowledge, there was generally a feeling of complacent satisfaction on the part of some teachers when they talked of their feelings toward their Indian students. One teacher commented, "We've taught them 2,000 years of civilization in five years, if you really think about it." It is difficult to convey this atmosphere by relying on one or two short quotes from the transcriptions of the teacher focus interviews, but the following comments might serve as an indication:

> "But now this one girl...she's a senior girl now. Her mother is quite a business woman; she's a pure blood Navajo...but quite a business woman. But just to show you how strong their culture is, (the daughter) came in yesterday and she said, 'I might have to miss school a day or two next week. My mother's having a ten-day fire dance.' She's been having medical problems; she goes to a doctor...for five years now and nothing seems to be happening...so she's having a ten-day fire dance with the medicine man...But this pull, this ceremonial pull, this cultural pull, it's so strong that even with these people--now her mother I don't think is highly educated...but (the daughter) is certainly a very contemporary young lady..."

That is to say, this woman was a successful business woman who knew enough to consult a medical doctor. But when he failed her, she was to be ridiculed for seeking help from a medicine man--regardless of the emotional, or even physical, relief it might afford her. How different is her behavior, though, from the actions taken by a person who, finding no relief from a medical problem, lights candles or consults his minister?

The students feel acutely that their teachers regard them as "dumb Indians." One said:

> "Teachers who come out here got the wrong idea, you know...we're primitive...yeah that's it right there... sometimes they won't believe we're Indians because we're dressed like a white man. They think we're just tanned white people...a lot of the teachers they think they do enough that we should be obligated--that we're really dumb and that we're dumb because of the fact that we get behind. They think, 'I've got to help those poor guys, they just don't know nothing,' and all that stuff...back East they think everybody's still wild out here. That we're still all riding around on horses hunting buffalo and everything else."

Factors affecting Indian students' behavior includes such cultural aspects as deference to one's elders, not speaking out in class, and unhappiness at being singled out for praise. Teachers who were raised and thrived in the competitiveness and bustling individualism of the American

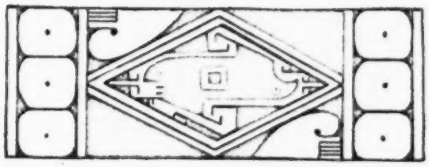
mainstream cannot accept such cultural factors. The passive nature of the Indian is considered "indifference." As several teachers said:

> "I find it hard to communicate with them (students). I haven't been able to get them to express themselves. You don't know even if they are unhappy really...They are so quiet in comparison to the mass demanding of attention that all the others demand, I'm not really aware that they are there all the time...They never make any demands--they just want to be left alone. It is easy to ignore their needs...They'll never ask --they'll never give you any trouble and they'll never ask for anything."

Instead of encouraging students to participate they are, in fact, further alienating them in their attempts to make a "white" student out of an Indian one. Recognition of needs is not enough, however. Application, on a daily basis of concepts to meet the needs peculiar to the Indian culture, is called for.

A student, in articulating the type of teacher he wants, said:

> "I think if it was my school and I was the one in charge of hiring teachers, I'd see that we got teachers that had a more open mind. You know, they didn't have as much prejudice against new ideas or the way the students thought. They would be patient when a student is trying to express his thoughts."



The students are aware of the problems that they have trying to adjust to the dominant society, especially in terms of language and basic communications:

> "It makes it that much harder because when you come to school and you have been speaking Navajo, the way most of the school programs are, some of them are changing, you come to school and you are expected to learn English and keep up with the rest of the United States and they (Indian students) have to go and learn a whole new language, then go home and speak Navajo again. It is hard."

They are also aware that their difficulties create special problems for their teachers. But the type of teacher they want would be able to meet them at least half-way, and not expect them to almost immediately drop their Indian culture and be assimilated into the dominant society. To the student, the teacher should foremost be a person, not a lecturer, willing to share his own experiences with his students, making the students feel that they then have experiences worth sharing with him. They want a teacher willing, first to listen to student ideas, and secondly to be receptive to their ideas. It is easier for the teacher to lecture than to conduct class discussions or call on individual students for ideas because of cultural factors previously mentioned. However, students feel it would be of benefit to themselves if teachers could draw students

out in a way that would connote success. As one student said:

> "I think the teacher should try to get them involved in the lower grades because, some of them, they feel backward so they sit way in the back of the room and then maybe the teacher will just ask the smart ones the answer."

Parents voiced the same thoughts:

> "I think that they can work with the students they have in the classrooms now, but if I sat down and just read this and not asked a question or two, I don't think I would get anything out of it unless we talked about it like we are doing here, in a general discussion. Instead of just all going to the board and putting a problem there and then all go up and work it."

Related to the student statement above is the perception that teachers are typing the students (i.e., if he's dumb, let him sit in the back of the room, and I'll only call on those who will respond to me). Instead of such an attitude, teachers should allow each student to feel he has contributed to the success of the total class in the discussion. In relating her own experiences in school, one parent said:

> "Teachers were different than here. When they teach you something they really teach you and they have classroom discussions and they don't leave anyone out. Like me--I was kind of quiet and not too outspoken, but they did make me talk and listen to the other people and I learned quite a bit."

Parents, too, are concerned over the perceived lack of genuine (as opposed to glib) interest the teachers have in their children. They believe the teachers are impersonal, not taking the time to get to know the students and their individual needs. It is not that parents, or students, feel they need Indian teachers so much as they need teachers who "have more experience with the Indian on the reservation" and teachers who will not "stay a year or two and then leave. And then, they come from the East and try to teach the Navajos."

However, because of the existing situation, students and parents feel that bringing in Indian teachers, teacher aides, and especially Indian counselors, would help create a better learning environment in the schools. Counselors especially were mentioned as the type of professionals who may have the knowledge but not the sympathy and outreach to allow Indian students to relate comfortably with them. The parents suggested that Indian counselors (para-professionals) would be most effective, not only in giving the students an opportunity to talk to someone they could trust, but also in serving as a sort of in-service training model for the professional counselor who lacks the sensitivity (or the image) to reach the Indian students, who needs "to be taught ways of communicating with Indian students that he can't learn in school."

Student Self-Image

Because of the role the school has in shaping the development of the student, the topic of student self-image is closely related to the concepts involved in creating positive educator-learner relationships. The sense of identity the student has of himself evolves from his contacts and interactions with his parents and teachers. In addition, their acceptance and pride in him influences his own sense of identity.

The attitudes of the parents have been shaped by their own encounters with the dominant society. Generally speaking, they do not feel they have succeeded in school; few are high school graduates. The attitudes of teachers who righteously extol the virtues of one society over another have taken their toll two-fold: first on the parents and then through the parents to their children. One relatively young mother told us:

> "I just graduated with a standard diploma. I had a tribal scholarship to go on to school, but I was afraid to try. I thought if I couldn't make it in high school, how could I make it in college, so I just went through to relocation."

However, she had enough to make it through a business school and to hold down a responsible secretarial position. Many of the parents feel that their own educations are lacking and that they are not qualified to direct their children. Instead of being able to turn to their parents for advice and assistance, the Indian student must turn to the schools for information about what lies outside the reservation--

another factor which is interpreted by the Indian student to mean that Indians are inferior in knowledge to the white man. Their pride in Indian ways is assailed on all sides. When one interviewer asked a student if most parents spoke an Indian language at home he replied, "They have to because most of them are dropouts." (Further development of the parental role in directing their children's education will be explored in the Community Involvement section.)

So the student is being told, perhaps indirectly at times, that he is of an inferior race and that he cannot succeed on the reservation. One student said, "When I went to school, I always thought the white man was better than me...because they just looked down on you, that's all." Other students in the group agreed.

Unlike any other group of students that Consulting Services Corporation has interviewed, the Indian students in Arizona had little to say about student freedoms and responsibilities--perhaps because the responsibilities they were given were so limited as to barely qualify as responsibilities. Teachers often referred to students simply following directions (i.e., "Everybody be back at the bus by three o'clock") as responsibility. Such limited examples were cited both pro and con to show that Indian students could or could not accept responsibility. No examples of a student exercising both responsibility and authority were given.

There is little incentive for the Indian student to assume responsibility because past and present conditions have made it convenient for him to "ride along" on the largess of such institutions as (a) the schools which furnish the discipline, (b) the BIA and other such agencies which locate jobs and provide him with relocation programs, and (c) the state which finally offers welfare assistance. Once such a cycle is begun, it is difficult to break. Systems founded on paternalism have little room for generating success, for building pride, or for developing respect for human dignity. In discussing the problems students are now encountering, an Indian teacher said:

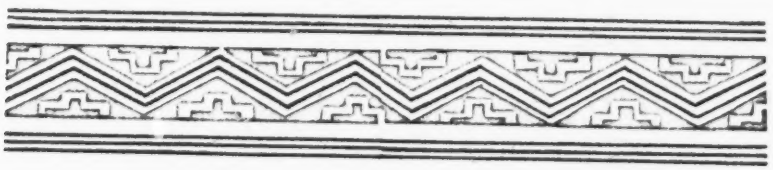
> "I think the big hang up is in the transition from their reservation to, say, the urban life. They are not afraid that they cannot succeed as far as the academic levels and the vocational skills and so on, but they are afraid of the social, personal things. On the job everything's fine, it's when they are off the job. They're not used to getting along by themselves, with themselves, and leaning on themselves... Is there anyway in our school environment that we can teach them to adjust to that?"

Teachers talk jokingly of students becoming successes if they get on the welfare rolls when, actually, what the student is seeking is relief from further failures. In self-defense the student gives up. One student put it:

> "If they can't hack it, they just drop out...Everything is so different. It's like a new way of life. You don't know how to adjust to it. The Indian also feels that he is not as good as the white student either, so they just drop out."

They acquiese to the system; they present a warm body to the teacher and they say they do not care what happens but, in reality:

> "...they're afraid they're going to make a mistake. It comes from elementary grades, they did something wrong and found out about it, and so they're scared they're going to be wrong again 'cause they've been wrong so many times before."



They do care. They need successes within the system to encourage them. "I guess," one student said, "you just have to pound it into their heads that you're just as good as the next guy. Take more pride in yourself." To overcome and erase the scars of the generations before them which have felt like failures, the successes will have to be carefully planned and executed. Many students, for example, do not want to be singled out in any way--either for success or failure. Hence, the curriculum should definitely include consideration of a gradual success factor for Indian students.

One way in which successes can be achieved and self-image built is through Indian culture classes. An Indian student said:

> "Why wouldn't you react that way if all through your educational years everything was the white man's... But if you got a class going in Indian culture and history, then I think a lot more of the kids would find out that Indians aren't just dumb, because they've been given that idea, because all through their high school years they've been further behind than the kids who spoke English and so they say, 'Well, I'm just dumb.'"

A class in Indian culture does not even necessarily mean a course distinct from the existing school curriculum. The need most students and parents are voicing is not for a detailed Indian history, but for an atmosphere in which Indian accomplishments are given deserved praise and a rightful place in the school. Indian folklore and customs could be incorporated into literature classes; the role of the reservation, historically and in the future, could be discussed in a contemporary problems class. By incorporating a positive approach to Indian contributions as well as other minority groups influencing Western development, two purposes might be served:

1. Eliminating the negative attitude that the Indian student has been subject to, strengthening his self-image, fostering a sense of pride and self-esteem.

2. Reaching students of other races in an attempt to break the cycle of one race's feelings of superiority over another.

Student Involvement

Direct student involvement in the learning processes seems to be a subject few of the participants--students, parents, as well as teachers--have seriously considered. Most teachers, when discussing experiences of responsibility for their students, were actually talking about student response to preset teacher rules and regulations:

> "They need more self-discipline. They won't discipline themselves. I don't know if you're cursed by the same trouble I am, but they will NOT memorize. You tell them definitions or rules that they gotta go by in mathematics and dates that I know he has to have--it's important to History, they won't do it, will they?"

While simply following orders is, perhaps, a first step in the process by which a teacher learns to respect the potential for responsibility in the student, some students were impatient with that sort of "responsibility." One asserted, "All of them (teachers) say you have no responsibility. Well, they don't give you any."

A teacher, however, mentioned that, in his class, he was trying to involve students more directly:

> "If we can teach them how to continue the learning process, then they can learn what they want to, what they feel is important."

Interestingly enough, students independently mentioned this particular class as one they most enjoyed. It would seem that students are ready to assume more responsibilities in directing the course of their education, given teacher encouragement and leadership. That more responsibility has not been given may be due in large part to curriculum structure. As another teacher said:

> "Could it be the fact that we are doing too much rote teaching in the lower grades? We expect them to learn certain facts and give them back to us, instead of thinking through how these facts apply to things, or what it does, and how you come up with this fact in relation to this fact."

In a separate interview, a different teacher amplified the point when he said:

> "One thing all of us in any school, Indians or anybody, (need to do) is to help people to learn self-realization, self-determination. And the history of Indian affairs in the last 100 years we haven't resolved too much of this. And there's still things going on where Indians are NOT self-determining. And I'm in favor of (it) and I don't know how you build a program around that but it NEEDS to be provided."

The relationship, then, between student and teacher, of either trust and respect or dominance and subservience, plays an important role in shaping the student's own feelings about his ability to assume responsibilities.

At almost every student focus interview, the participants began by making very few suggestions concerning changes they would like to see made in the present school system. Yet they certainly had complaints about the system and their teachers:

> "She keep talking and nobody is paying any attention --that's right, she is talking over our heads. There are some of us in that room that are not as smart as others. She doesn't ask if anyone has a question."

As they became more comfortable in the focus interview setting, their confidence gradually grew and they began to explore seriously the ways in which they would improve the schools. That is, they became directly involved in making suggestions for change. Many ideas were offered. The first, or starting point, was:

> "Let the student do things, so that he will be able to realize that he has respect of himself, instead of saying that just certain people have all the respect."

Given the opportunity and encouragement, students will not just sit impassively. One teacher, though, who was not reaching the students in her class asked, "Do they ever show enthusiasm for anything?" Perhaps students are better able to reach other students, and perhaps, too, this teacher could learn something from the student who related his experience in attempting to involve a group of under-achieving students in a school project:

"They just get in a group by themselves. When we have class meetings, a lot of the guys sit up front and those guys sit up back. They won't take part in the class. They talk Navajo and goof around. I went up to them and asked them to come help us personally, you know, when we were making signs, and now they're taking part. They're backward but they want to (participate) ...you just have to make them feel like they're part of the group, like they're wanted because they all want to be in."

By asking him to participate and by assuming that he can participate, the student is given the opportunity to show his interest.

Students suggested they pick their own classes instead of being bound by a set of requirements. At first a general uproar was raised: students would just take easy classes; they wouldn't be preparing themselves for a job or for college; the administration knew what was best and that's why requirements were established in the first place. One student was afraid that "a lot of guys wouldn't take English because it is a hard subject, so I think it should be required."

These concerns seem almost ludicrous given the fact that, under the present system, Indian students as a group have one of the highest dropout rates in the nation, that they are not prepared now to compete for jobs with the white worker, that there are few opportunities for them on the reservation to use what skills they may have acquired, and that those who do get to college usually drop out after a year or two.

Gradually, however, the discussion turned to the positive gains to be achieved by allowing the student to choose his own classes. If he were weak in English, it would be the student's personal responsibility to learn the language and it would be his achievement when he did learn it. Because he personally made the choice, he might not feel as students now do that for those

> "people who have been brought up in Navajo speaking homes," as one student said, "they can't see why it relates to them. Unless it is brought down into a personal basis that relates to them, what can they understand? They are never going to Washington or the state capitol so they say, 'Why should I care about that?' See what I mean?"

Another area of responsibility in which students seem eager to become involved is that of tutoring. A small program was started in one of the schools involved in the study. The participating students could see gains, not only for those being tutored, but for the tutors themselves. The benefits to the student tutored are obvious: he has someone to give him personal attention, someone who can sympathize with his problems. One student explained it, somewhat inarticulately but still expressively, as:

> "It takes a while to get them to know what they were supposed to be doing. They were having trouble knowing what a verb was or even a subject and this is their senior year. They just need time--someone to work with them all the time, to help them. And the teacher, well sometimes you feel as if the teacher

> really isn't helping you at all. Maybe you'd probably learn more if the student, you know...oh, I don't know."

Another student, referring to grade school teachers said, "I think I could do a better job than some of those teachers..."

The tutor, aside from assuming the responsibility and authority he assumed belonged only to the teacher, finds that he can do the job. He should find also that, in attempting to explain any given topic, his own grasp of the material sharpens. Coincidentally, his confidence and self-esteem should be bolstered.

Some teachers expressed amazement when their students showed great interest in subjects where they could participate directly. Unfortunately, there are now few opportunities for the students to become involved in such projects as a mock United Nations or a trip to the local airport.

There was one group of students who did not discuss the topic of student involvement much. They were also the only group of students interviewed who attended a school where the Indian student was a minority of the school population. Because of the particular environment, they evidently have not reached the stage where they have established a positive enough approach concerning their own capabilities to feel confident in offering suggestions for further student involvement in a school system which they feel puts them down, to use their jargon.

Educational Administration

In order to realize the needs mentioned by students, teachers and parents, the educational administration must provide the leadership in defining goals, coordinating the existing resources and initiating changes in the school and teaching organization. Because of their closer ties and relationship to the administration, teachers generally placed more emphasis on this need category than did the two other groups of respondents.

One of the greatest concerns of the respondents centered on the difficult transition period that occurs when a student graduates from a reservation grade school and attends a public high school. Both students and parents felt there should be more consistency between the two types of schools.

Specifically mentioned were:

a. The primarily Indian grade schools provided greater individual attention, tailoring the work (or even making it too easy) to their students' capabilities, thus making it more difficult for the students to adjust to the faster pace of the high school.

b. The high school, with its large enrollment of Caucasian, Spanish and Negro students, poses difficulties in adjustment for the Indian student whose experiences largely revolve around the reservation. In addition, the apparent difficulty in making personal contact with teachers throws the Indian student further off balance.

It was suggested that two basic changes be made. First the grade school should place more emphasis on academic achievement to prepare students to meet the challenges of the high schools. Secondly, the high schools should provide a more personal and warmer atmosphere for its students.

In conjunction with the interest in bolstering the academic level of the grade schools, all respondents mentioned the policy of passing a student on to the next grade even if he had not satisfactorly completed the previous work. While this policy simplifies the obvious social problems involved in keeping an older student behind one or two grades, it was generally agreed upon that the end results did not warrant the continued use of the policy. Instead of receiving help when it is first needed, the student who is simply passed on gets further and further behind, eventually dropping out because of his continued failures. One group of parents offered several suggestions to alleviate the problem. Teacher aides could be utilized to provide individual attention and assistance to students who are falling behind. Summer school classes might be provided for those students who need the extra time. The parents felt it was more important for the student to maintain his academic standing than to have free time during the summer months.

Several students mentioned the "track system" of classifying students into different sections at the same grade level. Again, from the teachers' standpoint, the system allows for more flexibility in teaching at various levels.

However, the students felt the segregation, by emphasizing the distinction between the brighter and slower students, was partially to blame for the lower track students feelings of inferiority--"it's putting them down." A better system, they felt, would be to allow each student to work at his own speed but would "mix up" the students in every class, relying on the teacher and on tutors to provide the necessary push to keep the slower students feeling a part of the larger student body.

Previously mentioned was the fact that students find their school work lacking in interest. Teachers find them unwilling to take an active part in the classroom. Aside from the cultural factors discussed, there is another aspect to this problem, briefly mentioned in the preceding section. That is, the need to develop programs and curriculum geared to the requirements of the community being served by the school. In recognition of this need one teacher mentioned:

> "For these people that live on the reservation--some of these things we are teaching are just not applicable. They can't use them. Really, there is no point in them learning them because they can't use them. I had two girls in my class one time and about the only reason they came to school was to have other girls to eat with and have a shower and a place to clean up. Nothing we were giving them was valuable to them."

The student's plea is mirrored in one young girl's remarks concerning Indian students:

"If they could just understand why they're having problems and how they're going to fit into this world; Indians do have a part in this world instead of just trying to be a white man."

The basic need is for the educational administration to provide the leadership in defining the goals inherent in Indian education. Teachers need the guidelines that a sensitive and aware administration can provide:

"Our whole educational system for the Indian falls short and I don't know what the answer is...Is it important that they mesh?...Either that or we fall short. Or should we have a completely different educational system for them because the one we have now certainly can't be doing the job."

The stumbling block seems to be the place of the reservation in coming generations. Does the reservation remain a part of the Indian cultural heritage or is it to become a place where the failures find refuge? Many teachers feel their role is to acculturate their Indian students while students and parents are hopeful that the reservation can be modernized to the point where it will provide a viable life for the Indian. It is to the administrator that the task lies in reconciling these differences and in providing the means by which goals can be reached. The system is self-defeating if a teacher feels that:

"We graduate them from high school here, and other places, and they have received a diploma. But they are no more qualified to go out in the outside world."

Curriculum Structure

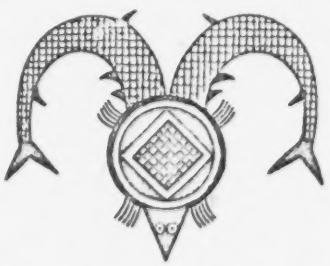
The need for making changes in the existing curriculum structure is the result of several factors:

1. Current program designs are evidently not successful enough to warrant continued use without serious reorganization. The English program in the primary grades, for example, needs considerable revision and expansion.

2. The curriculum does include specific subjects or subject areas that respondents feel are needed to keep them abreast of current developments. The most common courses mentioned in relation to this factor were vocational in nature.

3. As a corollary to a curriculum lacking certain subjects, is one which does not place sufficient emphasis on the subject areas offered. Again, the example most often mentioned was in the area of vocational preparation.

4. A final factor, common to almost all students, and not just to Indian students, is the complaint that some classes, notably history and English classes, dwell in the far recesses of "ancient" history. There is not a sufficiently clear link made concerning the relevancy of such courses to the student's requirements in today's society.



There are still a good number of Indian students for whom English is a second language. Because they encounter difficulties greater than their school-mates (including the English speaking Indian students), they tend to form cliques by themselves and further alientate themselves from the school environment. All respondents felt that there was a critical need to assimilate these students into the school structure. Some programs are currently underway, in the elementary grades, utilizing Indian speaking teacher aides, in an attempt to meet this need. How successful the program will be remains to be seen.

The problem may eventually disappear as succeeding generations of Indians are exposed to the public school system and gradually acquire a knowledge of English. As previously mentioned, many parents who know some English insist on speaking only English in the home in order to prepare their children for school. However, the problem still must be attacked now because great difficulties are caused by it. As one parent said:

> "My mother and father never went to school and I had to speak Navajo all the way. I never started school until I was 10. It was hard for me to learn. I was in a state of confusion whether to learn more English or not. It was really hard for me to talk both for a long time. Today there is a lot of (children) that still don't know what to speak. They go to school and learn English and come home and their parents speak Navajo, then go back to school and they don't know where they left off."

The immediate need now is to bridge the gap that does exist for the present generation of students. The fact that a student has a shakey foundation in English will most likely cause him to do poorly in all other academic areas.

The larger need was expressed by one teacher, "We're not fair to them using textbooks that were geared for children who have a different background." One teacher, realizing the magnitude of the problem, has been attempting to re-write her shorthand book, using sound patterns familiar in Indian languages rather than concentrating, as the current textbook does, on sounds for which the Indians have no counterpart. Another teacher, in attempting to develop a curriculum for English as a second language, found no one who had developed any materials on the secondary school level. Her comments were:

> "We should be teaching with an approach that they will understand. I mean how can everyday English that we take for granted--it would be a very elementary thing to me--they would just have four YEARS of that."

It was suggested that speech classes would also be of value in providing the students with more practice and thus give them more confidence in speaking English.

The topic of additional vocational courses reflects the students' and parents' concerns about being prepared to participate in and contribute to society, either on or off the reservation. Specifically mentioned were classes in computer operations and courses designed to prepare the student for jobs for which there are known demands for workers. The

expansion of a vocational program should be planned with another factor in mind. Many respondents voiced the opinion that the schools and society in general were over-emphasizing the need for a college education to the detriment of those students who might achieve success in a vocational program but who felt compelled instead to enroll in the college-preparatory curriculum. One parent, who was very concerned that the over-emphasis on college was creating more dropouts, said:

> "They should be taught assembly line work because it doesn't take a college diploma for that. There will always be dropouts from school and then there are people who will always go on to school so both type of jobs should be available."

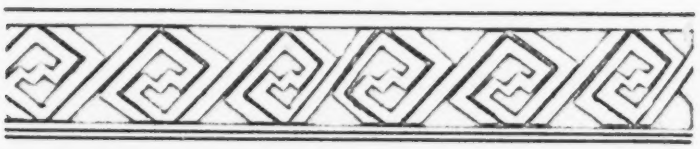
Even with the vocational courses now being offered, respondents said there was little done in the field of acquainting students with opportunities to use the skills they were acquiring. A student in a city high school suggested that local businessmen be invited to speak at the school, in a series of lectures, to familiarize the students with the responsibilities and the need for employees in their fields. As she put it, "They know what they're talking about because they're in there." It was also suggested that field trips to area manufacturers and businesses be instituted so that students have the opportunity to be "exposed to it and see what his job is and everything and you see the importance of it."

The senior career day was generally maligned as being too little, too late. It was suggested that that type of program begin at the junior high school level and be expanded to bring in the BIA to talk of relocation opportunities, tribal officials to discuss available scholarships, and the State Employment Service.

The universal complaint of students is that, instead of the regular history course, they want "modern day, not like Columbus. Why do we have to remember them now? You could, but you have to live with modern stuff now." This also reflects the concerns of a group of teachers who are attempting to develop a curriculum which will prove relevant to students as well as provide them with the basic knowledge they need in order to succeed in society. Some programs of team teaching sound promising. One teacher involved in a Math-English combination of teaching described it this way:

> "He's teaching Math and the only thing he's trying to do is to help them become proficient enough in the areas of Math: in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division so that they can carry on a responsible life here as a citizen in the community. And from the standpoint of English we necessarily have to start with reading, because most of these kids can't read...we try to gear the material to their ability levels, and then hopefully add a little writing...but from the standpoint of teaching them formal grammar or Shakespeare or anything that you would teach <u>normally</u> to a group of kids, the reading material that they have is also geared to their interests. And it's not something that they wouldn't be interested in."

39/40



The value of field trips was mentioned briefly above. Some of the teachers participating in the focus interviews seemed to view field trips as a quick solution to the problem which was posed by one student:

> "A lot of the teachers talk about the difficulties in the way some people are, but you just don't get out to see them. We just hear about them and study about them, but we never see the real thing. We never get to go out."

The field trip is a useful tool in providing experiences to the student which will make him feel more comfortable in an environment outside the reservation. Caution, however, should be exercised in using field trips. Unless the field trip is related to the student's ability and experience levels, it could make him even more fearful of the urban environment. For example, a five-day trip to San Francisco was not as successful as it might have been because the students were not adequately prepared for the new surroundings. A one-day trip to the Phoenix airport, however, talking to stewardesses, ticket takers and maintenance personnel, was an experience to which students were able to relate; consequently, it built up their confidence and willingness to travel.

Community Involvement

The extent to which parents and the community should shape educational goals and become involved in the teaching, learning, planning and administration of the school system is open to conflicting viewpoints. Except for the students enrolled at the parochial school where the parents were paying directly for their education, students and teachers generally spent very little time discussing this topic. Parents, however, devoted much of their energies in exploring the meaning and implications involved in developing fuller community participation in the educational structure.

It would not be too harsh to say that most teachers dismissed the parents entirely from the picture. The teachers feel that they, and not the parents, are "pretty much a dedicated group, that really feels a moral responsibility" and, as several teachers remarked:

> "I think that the Indian parents, if they were sold on education, this will be the saving thing to the Indian people...I think most (of the students), though, don't have any encouragement from their parents at all for their education."

As with their students, teachers have encountered what they consider to be a wall of indifference and apathy in trying to communicate with parents. Instead of examining why the parents might exhibit such traits, they have simply accepted

them at face value or dismissed them with such reasoning as:

> "What does a Navajo family think of a student that leaves school? They are disappointed, but they're not really upset. There's too many other things you can do. You can do nothing, if you want. You can come home and herd sheep or you can go out and pick beets for a while. They never scold their children for that. They're disappointed, but I've never seen anyone really blow their stack about it."

From the remarks that students make though, this cannot be the case. In fact some students see it as just the opposite:

> "My parents just tell me to try very hard and study hard. After being at a place like this (school) no one really encourages you, but when you go home they do."

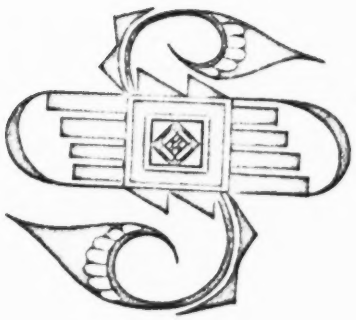
The teacher says that "there's no social pressure behind him (the student) to stay in school," yet a student, almost in tears, says:

> "My parents brought me up since no one else in my family had a real high education that I should be the one and they push you. My parents actually pushed me. They tell you you've got to be the best. You know they just push you. My dad pushes. He said he wants the best. And my brother, he dropped out of college, and ever since then my dad he hasn't been the same. He keeps telling me that I have to be the monument to the...I don't know, I just feel like giving up sometimes when he says that."

This particular situation was admittedly an extreme case, but many other students voiced similar sentiments.

Why have teachers gotten this impression of the parents? Many parents are hesitant to take an active role in the education of their children. They <u>say</u> that they want to abrogate their responsibilities to the schools to discipline their children and to prepare them for the future. However, they <u>mean</u> that they feel unequal to meet their responsibilities because the education they received did not prepare them to deal with the world their children are entering. It was suggested that the parents themselves receive counseling, possibly through the Tribal Council, in an attempt, as one parent said, "to try to get them to understand all this education problem and maybe from there they would start with their young ones, go on from there."

The parents who did participate in the focus interview mentioned the group of "silent" parents. They felt it was important that they do involve themselves directly in the schools so that their children receive more positive encouragement from home concerning the value of an education. It was suggested that tribal elders might speak in the schools in order that the students better understand the forces and the traditions that were involved in shaping their parents' attitudes.



Many of the parent participants said that they wanted to take a more active role in shaping school policy but instead were consulted after the fact, when they were consulted at all. One mother mentioned that, because they are not consulted, parents tend further to lose interest. Because a parent's attitude is often reflected in his child, the parents felt it was more important to encourage parental interest and participation in the school. They suggested that teachers and parents work together more closely in developing programs that would most benefit the child. Parents should be discussing with the teachers what goals the parents have for their children, what might be best for their children and what the children are capable of handling. It was also suggested that parents would be interested in donating time to serve as aides in schools.

SECTION III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this needs assessment is to assist the Title III Advisory Council in its administrative functions. The study was designed to provide guidelines that the Council can use in reviewing, orienting and allotting funds to those program applicants that show promise of alleviating the pressing Indian educational needs in Arizona.

The study was further organized as the first step of a statewide system of evaluation and assessment of student needs in Arizona. That is to say, the current study was not designed to provide a sweeping analysis of the entire spectrum of educational problems, goals and needs within the state.

Inherent in the statements of purpose are the factors which dictated the constraints on the study:

1. Since the study was seen as an interim measure to provide needed materials from which the Council could make administrative decisions, there was an immediate use for the research. Because of the time element involved, all research, field work and analysis had to be completed within the three-month contract limit.

2. The materials developed in the course of the contract, as well as the resulting analysis of needs, were coordinated with the larger research project undertaken by Arizona State University.

3. As a pilot needs assessment, so to speak, funds were limited. Therefore, any methodology which might employ costly data programming and analysis was ruled out. Consulting Services Corporation developed an assessment which could provide the background required by the Council.

Needs can be assessed by convening a group of educational experts to discuss their views of the situation. However valid the resulting information, the assessment would be relying on secondary data sources. Since the direction and purpose for the educational system evolves from those persons whom the system serves, Consulting Services Corporation based its need assessment on the viewpoints of those persons: the student, the teacher, and the parent. Local school administrators were interviewed to provide insights into the whys and wherefores of respondent statements, and educational researchers were consulted on questionnaire design and interviewing techniques.

Prior to the field work, a preliminary research phase was completed. The results of the research and consultation yielded a list of generalized educational goals as well as the component list of needs suggested by the goals. In addition, statistics pertaining to the socio-economic characteristics of the Indian student were collected for later use in analysis of the field work data.

The basic component of the methodology employed in the assessment of Indian educational needs was the focus interview. The focus interview is a technique of group discussion which stimulates interaction between the participating members with a minimum of interviewer leadership or control. The discussion provides in-depth information on people's opinions and preferences. The interview is generally conducted with a group of seven to ten persons. The focus interview not only provides more "in-depth" information, it provides a greater quantity of information. Thus, one focus interview with eight participants provides more information than eight individual interviews, particularly given the level of verbal skills of the participants.

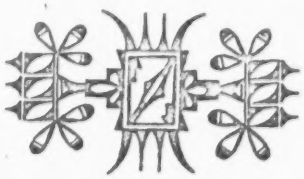
In addition to the focus interview, two questionnaires were developed. The respondent questionnaire, which was distributed at the beginning of each focus interview, lists general educational goals. The list of goals served as the stimulus for discussion. Respondents were asked, additionally, at the end of the interview, to rank the top three goals and to indicate needs and programs suggested by the goals. The ranking of goals by participants (see Section I) was used as a tool for gaining insights into the needs expressed during the course of the focus interview.

The second questionnaire was completed by the interviewers. It was used to judge the relative interaction among participants and to indicate any biases that may have appeared due to dominant personalities or environmental conditions of the interview.

Each focus interview was tape recorded to insure a complete and accurate transcript of the discussion. Where scheduling allowed, two interviewers attended the focus interviews to safeguard against interviewer bias in interpreting the results of the interview. Each completed the interviewer questionnaire separately.

All tapes were transcribed by stenographers, the final transcriptions running an average of 20 typewritten pages. Although it was not possible to distinguish the different participants, the transcriptions do indicate when a different speaker begins. Remarks made by the interviewers are also noted. Each transcription was then analyzed and classified according to the types of statements of needs expressed by the participants. Again, the classifications were made by one analyst and cross-checked by another to preclude individual biases.

It is on the basis of the classification of statements that a ranking of the six need statements was made. Thus, the ranking of needs does not indicate, as does the ranking of goals, the degree of importance in which they are viewed by the focus interview participants. Rather, the needs ranking reflects the amount of time which the respondents spent discussing each item.



A total of ten focus interviews were conducted during the week of October 20. The schools chosen for participation in the study represent the main types of schools found in Arizona which serve the Indian student:

a. The public school with a majority enrollment Indian

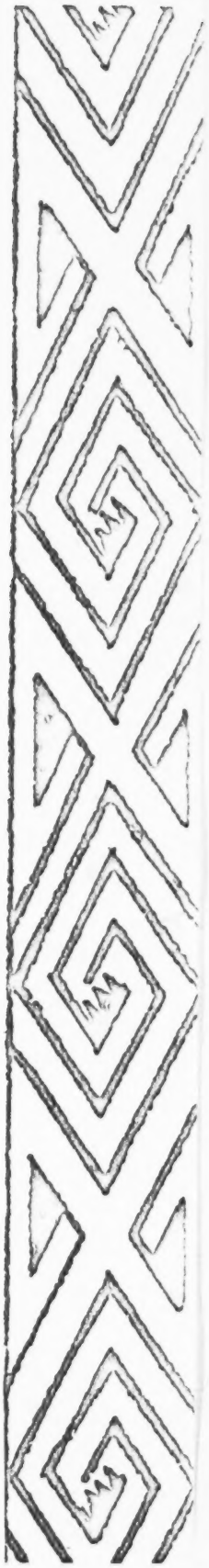
b. The parochial or mission school

c. The public school with a minority enrollment Indian

d. The Bureau of Indian Affairs school

At each of these schools, focus interviews were held with high school students (juniors and seniors) and high school teachers, representing a cross-section of the academic and vocational fields. Because of the difficulty of calling parent meetings, focus interviews with parents were held only at the two public schools.

Differences of opinions among the respondents from the various types of schools, as well as among the various types of respondents, are noted in the body of the report. It was hoped that interviews would also be conducted with groups of dropouts or those who had dropped out and returned to school. However, the problems involved in arranging for such interviews, as well as the reticence of the potential participants, made such interviews impractical, given the time constraints in the study.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

FOCUS INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

The following quotes, excerpts from the focus interviews, have been organized according to the six need categories to give the reader a summary of participant viewpoints.

A. There is a need to develop student involvement, encouraging student interest and participation in the learning process, providing experiences of responsibility and authority, and participation in decisions concerning their education.

A.1. Teacher: "Do they (students) ever show enthusiasm for anything?"

A.2. Student: "I think we should learn what we want to learn."

A.3. Student: "Sometimes the classes are just boring, not interesting--like English class. Most of them (teachers) just talk and talk and talk."

A.4. Teacher: "I'm not very good at drawing out discussions, I guess. I just have fits trying to get any discussion going. Oh, I can get a little formal accord, but actually to get them to discuss, boy I have my troubles."

A.5. Teacher: "They never make any demands. They just want to be left alone. It is easy to ignore their needs."

A.6. Student: "They (underachieving students) just get in a group by themselves...They won't take part in the class. They talk Navajo and goof around. I went up to them and asked them to come help us personally...now they're taking part...you just have to make them feel like they're part of the group, like they're wanted because they all want to be in."

A.7. Teacher: "Navajo students aren't interested in books anyway, but well all Indian children aren't. I don't mean that, but..."

A.8. Student: "Let the student do things, so that he will be able to realize that he has respect of himself, instead of saying that just certain people have all the respect."

A.9. Parent: "If I was a school teacher, I'd find out who made good grades and who made low, and ask them why and keep them after school and counsel with them. I think class discussion does a lot too."

B. There is a need to reorganize curriculum structures in conjunction with reexamining the content of subject matter taught in the schools.

B.1. Student: "This course we're taking is just designed for white people and those who get good grades in there are those who have been speaking English since they were little and everything else."

B.2. Student: "A lot of the teachers talk about the difficulties in the way some people are, but you just don't get out to see them. We just hear about them and study about them, but we never see the real thing. We never get to go out."

B.3. Teacher: "We're not fair to them using textbooks that were geared for children who have a different background."

B.4. Parent: "I think the teachers should stress what is available once you get out...give them (students) an idea of what they should go into, what it is all about. Ask the individual what you would like to be when you graduate."

B.5. Teacher: "What we need in the teaching profession is some people that are not so subject-mater oriented, but people who can really relate to these kids, and can teach them something other than subject matter at this particular stage in their educational development."

B.6. Teacher: "We try not to rely too much on language and teaching math in high school, except for my advanced students. I expect them to be able to read the book and understand. I think the abstract thinking gets to the kids."

C. There is a need to establish educator-learner relationships promoting further understanding, respect and communication between students and educators.

C.1. Student: "Teachers who come out here got the wrong idea, you know...we're primitive...yeah, that's it right there...sometimes they won't believe we're Indians because we're dressed like a white man. They think we're just tanned white people...a lot of the teachers they think they do enough that we should be obligated that we're really dumb and that we're dumb because of the fact that we get behind. They think, 'I've got to help those poor guys, they just don't know nothing,' and all that stuff...back East they think everybody's still wild out here. That we're still all riding around on horses hunting buffalo and everything else."

C.2. Teacher: "We've taught them 2,000 years of civilization in five years, if you really think about it."

C.3. Parent: "I talked with two or three different teachers and asked them why they came all the way here to teach. What did they say? You'd be surprised; they didn't pay enough in the East."

C.4. Teacher: "There's bound to be a type of group (of teachers), pretty much a dedicated group, that really feels a moral responsibility."

C.5. Student: "I think if it was my school and I was the one in charge of hiring teachers, I'd see that we got teachers that had a more open mind. You know, they didn't have as much prejudice against new ideas or the way the students thought. They would be patient when a student is trying to express his thoughts."

C.6. Parent: "I think the teachers themselves should take more interest in their classes."

C.7. Teacher: "You see these people. They get completely aculturated...(but) they're so very Indian, and they're still steeped in their traditions...I don't like to think we're imposing. Maybe that's what we are doing, though."

D. There is a need for building the self-image of the Indian student to provide the student with a sense of dignity and pride to foster self-esteem and a sense of identity, encouraging self-confidence and a willingness to compete.

D.1. Student: "Why wouldn't you react that way if all through your educational years everything was the white man's and all of a sudden this white man comes up. But if you got a class going in Indian culture and history, then I think a lot more of the kids would find out that Indians aren't just dumb, because they've been given that idea, because all through their high school years they've been further behind than the kids who spoke English and so they say, 'Well, I'm just dumb!"

D.2. Student "I guess you just have to pound it into their heads (quiet students) that you're just as good as the next guy. Take more pride in yourself."

D.3. Teacher: "I think a lot of our absentees that we have, we have a lot of absentees, I think a lot of our absentees are due to the fact that the kids come in, they can't do the work, get disgusted, and go home."

D.4. Student: "That's the way our class is. They're afraid they're going to make a mistake. It comes from elementary grades, if they did something wrong and found out about it, and so they're scared they're going to be wrong again 'cause they've been wrong so many times before."

D.5. Parent: "I just graduated with a standard diploma. I had a tribal scholarship to go on to school, but I was afraid to try. I thought if I couldn't make it in high school how could I make it in college, so I just went through to relocation."

D.6. Student: "We can't go in there and tell them (counselors) why we did something. It would be much better if we had someone from our own grade. They don't understand us...they are prejudiced anyhow."

D.7. Teacher: "They (students) perhaps do not consider themselves part of our society and for that reason they may have some kind of a complex when they do mix with people."

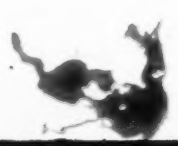
D.8. Teacher: "When they (students) play a game, they are more likely to just play the game for the sake of playing, rather than for being top dog. Well, of course, we're competitive."

E. There is a need to promote community involvement and to encourage the participation of the community in the educational system for the purpose of defining and achieving educational goals.

E.1. Teacher: "I think most of them (students), though, don't have any encouragement from their parents at all for their education."

E.2. Student: "My parents just tell me to try very hard and study hard. After being at a place like this (school) no one really encourages you, but when you go home they do."

E.3. Teacher: "They (parents) don't bring the pressure to bear on the kids to stay in school. It's not that important to their culture, and when this kid constantly and continually never gets a success out of things which he can't do, then there is no real incentive for him to stay in school, and there's no social pressure behind him to stay in school."



E.4. Student: "My parents brought me up since no one else in my family had a real high education that I should be the one and they push you. My parents actually pushed me. They tell you you've got to be the best. You know they just push you. My dad pushes. He said he wants the best, and my brother, he dropped out of college, and ever since then my dad he hasn't been the same. He keeps telling me that I have to be the monument to the...I don't know, I just feel like giving up sometimes when he says that."

E.5. Teacher: "I think that the Indian parents, if they were sold on education, this will be the saving thing to the Indian people."

E.6. Parent: "I think today most of the parents feel kids should go to school, but it is the kids that don't want to go to school...They have more activities outside when they get home, I guess is one of the reasons. They just want to go places."

F. There is a need for the personnel involved in educational administration to provide the processes by which educational goals are defined and resources coordinated to achieve the goals.

F.1. Teacher: "Hopefully, they won't be on the reservation for the rest of their lives. Isn't that the whole thing we are trying to do, to phase them out?"

F.2. Teacher: "Most of them don't have any use for going back (to the reservation). They may end up being forced to through not succeeding."

F.3. Student: "They asked, 'Are you going to go back to your reservation?' That's where you get stuck, you know. Do I really want to go back? I sort of owe it to my people to go back and help them. Well, it seems like you might be taking a step in the wrong direction. You might be stepping backwards, because not everybody on the reservation is, you know, they're not as educated as you are."

F.4. Parent: "The younger generation now is beginning to think a lot about the tribal government on the reservation and how to help their people. A lot of the young ones are thinking of politics. I think they have a better understanding of it. They see the need."

F.5. Teacher: "Well, you have to decide. Are we going to live like urban America, or are we going to live like Navajo? Two cultures cannot exist side by side. You can't have two separate ones. You have to decide how to go and then go."

F.6. Teacher: "You have to realize that the kids we have today kind of exist between a twilight zone of their old culture and the new culture, and they're damned either way, whether they can or they can't. And it's going to take a little while to either push them one way or the other, or they're going to revolt and go entirely back to native again."

INDIAN EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Please read all the way through the first page. We will then discuss page one.

It should first be emphasized that this is not just another "study" of Indian education. The State of Arizona Department of Public Instruction has funds for grants which are currently being distributed to improve educational programs within the state. Your viewpoints will be carefully considered to determine how the funds can be used best for new and promising Indian education concepts.

Following is a list of educational goals we want to discuss. Because of his experience in school, a student should:

Understand himself and appreciate his dignity as an individual and his identity as a member of society.

Understand and appreciate different social, cultural and ethnic groups as well as his own.

Achieve basic skills in the use of words and numbers.

Obtain a positive attitude toward the learning process.

Learn the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

Learn good physical health habits.

Recognize the opportunity to be creative and follow his own interests.

Understand and appreciate accomplishments in the arts and sciences.

Be able to adjust to the rapidly changing world of the future.

Please write in additional goals that you think are important.

Example: A student should recognize a variety of opportunities open to him in the world.

_____

_____

_____

_____

60/62

List the three educational goals that you think are most important and most needed on your reservation. List the most important one first. You may take the most important ones from the list on the first page if you like, or you may put down what you think are more important goals.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

For the first goal that you have listed, say below what you think the Indian problem is and how it can be corrected.

Sample Goal #1 A student would recognize a variety of opportunities open to him in the world.

Sample Problems related to above goals: students are not told about all the different things they can do, but just what they can do on the reservation.

Sample Programs to achieve the above goal: (a) have special career counselor for Indians who know where the jobs are and can talk to Indian students about what all they can do after they graduate, and (b) make a documentary film to show Indian students and parents about successful Indians, on and off the reservation, that are working on different jobs.

Goal #1 _____

Problem _____

_____

_____

Programs needed _____

_____

_____

CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

Consulting Services Corporation, with offices in Seattle, Washington, and St. Paul, Minnesota, is a firm specializing in economic and educational research and governmental services. Clients include private business, legislative bodies, and local, state and Federal government.

During the last three years, Consulting Services Corporation has participated in over 20 major research and planning projects in seven states. More recently, national evaluations have taken Consulting Services Corporation to an additional 24 states. Some of the work experience relevant to surveys and educational problems include (a) an assessment of educational needs for students in Washington State for the Title III ESEA Advisory Council, (b) a national evaluation of Adult Basic Education programs for the U. S. Office of Economic Opportunity, including development of an evaluative model and management information system, (c) a study of seasonal farm workers in the State of New Jersey for the Governor's Migrant Labor Task Force, (d) a survey of the characteristics of migratory farm workers in Washington State, prepared as background information for administrative and legislative change, and (e) the design of a Human Resources Utilization program for the Washington State Office of Economic Opportunity.

Additional information regarding the work experience of Consulting Services Corporation can be made available upon request.